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Hurricane Michael becomes years first Category 3 storm; Leslie eyes Bermuda

Hurricane Michael became the first category 3 Atlantic storm of 2012, while Hurricane

Leslie continued to slowly move northwards thursday morning, according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami. Michael was not expected to make land fall but Leslie could hit Bermuda. Michael early Thursday had maximum sustained winds near 115 m.p.h. as it moved north-east at 7 m.p.h. about 1,020 miles west-southwest of the Azores, the center stated. No coastal watch or warnings were in effect.

The 7th hurricane of the 2012 atlantic season, Michael was expected to turn north-northwest with gradual weakening possible by Friday. Michael is "well removed from any land interests" and is "not a wave generator for the East Coast," Jonathan Erdman, a meteorologist for the Weather channel, told NBC NEWS. Meanwhile, Leslie continued moving north at 1 m.p.h. with no change in strength. Its potential track puts it near Bermuda on Sunday. A category 1 hurricane, Leslie had maximum sustained winds of 75 m.p.h., just a mile above Hurricane status, and was about 440 miles south-south-east of Bermuda. Leslie is expected to gradually strengthen over the next 48 hours and could become a Category 2 hurricane.

Current storm projections show Leslie tracking off the Eastern Seaboard to south of Nova Scotia, Canada but not making landfall, Erdmann said. "Leslie will continue to be a generator of waves along the east coast, with a rip current threat persisting through Saturday from Florida to New England," Erdman said. Swells generated by Leslie also will impact Bermuda, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands "for the next few days," the hurricane center stated.